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MANITOULIN YOUTH BIBLE CAMP - 2003

Speaker: Bro. Roger Lewis

Evening Program: The story of Joash and Zechariah

Reading: 2 Chronicles 22

Well, thank you brother chairman!

Now can I have hands up those who are 'squirts' here. Hands up all 'squirts'! excellent! Now do you know that a long time ago, Uncle Peter who does the quiz in the morning, he was a older teen; and a long time ago, Uncle Ken was a young teen, and a long time ago, Uncle Dave was an intermediate, and a long time ago, Uncle Phil was a junior. And you won't believe this, but a long time ago, Uncle Tom was a squirt! that was a **long time ago!** and tonight I'm going to tell you the story of two boys who began before they were even 'squirts' (they were so small when this story starts) and by the time the story's ended, they're grown up and they're men as old as Uncle Dave and Uncle Phil, and that's pretty old!

The name of these two boys is Joash and Zechariah, and the reason why you need to have your paper tonight is because what I'm going to do, is I'm simply going to tell you a story; I'm going to tell you a bible story, but as I tell you the story tonight, I want you to take a note for me of certain things, and I'm going to ask you some questions at the end of the story.

So first of all, you need to get your paper and pencil ready, you need to get your bible open to 2 Chronicles 22, and when you've all got your bibles open then we'll start the story together. Okay, hands up those that are ready? paper out, pencils posed, okay that's good.

Now I'm going to tell you the story of these two boys tonight, and what I want you to write down for me is this, as we go through the story I'm not going to stop, but I'm going to let little clues drop and what I want you to write down for me on your piece of paper tonight, is what you think the great lessons of this story are? Every time you think there's a really good lesson in this story that could help us, in our life in the truth, I want you to write the lesson down; what you think the lesson is. There might be quite a few of them! I want you to see how many of these that you can find as we go through the story tonight. Then when I get to the end of the story, I'm going to ask you all to give your lessons and we'll compare notes and just see how many lessons we've got! because good bible study is all about finding lessons that will help us live the truth. So are you ready for the beginning of the story? Well, here's where the story begins in 2 Chronicles 22 and in verse 10.

It says there, 'But when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah'. Now can anyone tell me who Athaliah was? who was her mother? Jezebel, that wicked woman, Jezebel. That's right and Athaliah was her daughter. Do you want to know how bad Athaliah was? She was a wicked witch, I tell you, because look what it says in verse 10, it says, 'when she saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed **all the seed royal** of the house of Judah; do you know who the seed royal were? the seed royal was all the little princes and all the little princesses; and do you know who they really were? they were her own **grandchildren**, her own grandchildren! She destroyed all the children of the royal house of Judah, so she might preserve her own place, because she was on the throne, she was the queen! and for one brief terrible moment in the history of Israel, the offspring of Jezebel ruled both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah simultaneously, the offspring of Jezebel ran **all of Israel** for one brief terrible moment in the history of the nation. This woman was prepared to murder her own grandchildren!

But there was one little boy that she missed! and his name was Joash. Sometimes he's called Jehoash, but mainly he's called Joash; and we're told why Athaliah missed him because in verse 11 it says, 'But Jeho-shabeath, the daughter of the king took Joash the son of Ahaziah and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber'. So you see, Jeho-shabeath was a faithful woman and she saw what Athaliah was doing, so she stole one of the little babies away, and hid him somewhere, do you know why I know he was a baby? how do you think that we know he was a baby? yes, because he was in a crib-type thing! that could be right, in fact, do you see what it says in verse 11, 'that she hid him and his nurse', and the word 'nurse' there, by the way, means a 'nurse that still gives milk' (3243) he was a suckling child; he was a little baby still feeding on the milk. Mind you, don't you think it's rather a surprising place where Jeho-shabeath hid him? fancy putting him in a bedroom! don't you think that queen Athaliah would discover a little boy in a bedroom? Hands up those that think the queen would find him in a bedroom? I think you're right! but it wasn't a bedroom, you see, because you see that word 'bedchamber' in verse 11, it actually means 'the chamber of the palace mattresses' (4296) It was one of the storerooms down underneath the palace where the mattresses and covers for the beds were stored; it wasn't a proper bedroom at all! and down there in some secret place, the little boy was hidden with his nurse, until Jeho-shabeath could get him safely out of the palace to where she was going to hide him.

Do you know where she was really going to hide him? She was really going to take the little boy-yes? to the temple; you're absolutely right! Fancy living in the temple, which part do you think she lived in? the Holy Place or the Most Holy Place? neither? well, I thought you said they lived in the temple? Where did the priests live? you're absolutely right, of course! Does anyone know where the priests lived if they lived in the temple? because it couldn't have been in the Holy Place or the Most Holy Place, what thinkest thou? Ah, well, what they did is, right around the edge of the temple, they built a set of rooms, and in those rooms were various articles stored for the furniture of the temple,

and in one of those rooms, yes, you're quite right, the high priest lived in the very house of God, and the name of the high priest was? can anyone tell me the name of the high priest because we haven't got to him yet? The name of the high priest was Jehoiada, that's right! and Jeho-shabeath wasn't just the daughter of the king, by the way, she was also married to the high priest! exactly right! So in a little bedroom off the back of the temple, the high priest lives with his wife and his family, but now he's got another little boy! Another little boy running around the temple that apparently is the son of the high priest and his name is Joash; and the record tells us in verse 12, it says, 'he was hid with them in the house of God for 6 years', from a little wee tacker to 6 years old. Hands up any 6 year olds! no, 6 year olds, okay, some are 6 in spirit! Well, when he was 6 years old, his dad, well, who's his dad? well, the only dad he ever knew, the only father this boy ever knew was Jehoiada the high priest, he grew up as having Jehoiada the high priest as his father.

We're told in chapter 23 verse 1, 'that in the 7th year, and that's the 7th year of Athaliah's reign, but it's probably also the 7th year of Joash, Jehoiada strengthened himself and took the captains of hundreds and they went about, it says, in Judah and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah and the chief of the fathers of Israel and they came to Jerusalem, and all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God'. A covenant with the king! in the house of God, I thought the king was the queen? I thought that Athaliah was the queen, who's the king of verse 3, do you think, of 2 Chronicles 23? Joash! but he hasn't been crowned as yet! excellent I think that's probably right! could have been Jehoiada too, because in a sense, Jehoiada was the king-priest of the nation, but I think you're probably right, I think they came to make a covenant before the boy that was to be the king. Can you imagine, by the way, what they must have felt like when they came into the house of God, creeping into the house of the high priest? Can you imagine this day? and he says to all these leaders out of the nation, 'come, I want you to come into my house, in the temple', and he opens the door and they all go in, and he shuts the door, and out from this other little chamber, the door opens, and out steps a little boy! They would all look at the little boy, and Jehoiada put his hands on the shoulders of the little boy and said, 'you see this boy, he's of the royal house of the son of David!' and the line of David had been preserved, that was the line of Messiah! Can you imagine how important it was that that line be preserved? can you imagine how emotionally overwhelmed the nation would have been, the leaders would have been, to know that the one of the house of David was still there? and they made covenant with that king that day, that they would support him.

Because Jehoiada had a plan, he had a secret plan as to what he was going to do, because what he did was he cancelled all leave among the Levites; no Levite was allowed to go off duty, they all stayed in the temple at that stage. We're told in verse 9, it says, 'Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds, spears and bucklers and shields that had been king David's, which were in the house of God. He set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about'. Now we need to understand what's going on here, so first of all, let's get the temple

organized, shall we? First of all, we want the altar facing east (I'm going to ask Uncle Roy to stand up for a moment because he's the altar) Can you all see the altar? there he is, there's the altar! Now by the way, east is that way, I think, that's right, because due north and the big dipper would be over that way there, and the sun is setting in the west right now, so that's about east there, and the altar faced east! East across the valley to the mount of Olives, so behind the altar would be the temple. The temple is back over there; now in front of the altar there were two - what was in the front of the altar? - two things! two large pillars, that's right! Now I think if we got Uncle Jeff and Uncle Tom to stand up as two mighty pillars, don't you reckon they'd make good pillars? Oh, yes, I think so! Now the two pillars need to face Uncle Roy because you've got to be directly in line with the altar. So here's the altar facing east, and here's the two pillars; if I went between Uncle Jeff and Uncle Roy, I'd be walking into the Holy Place of the temple. The temple goes right back to old Uncle Phil at the back there, he's the back end of the temple.

Now what they did was this! Can you imagine that from Uncle Jeff if we took a great big circle all the way up here, and all the way round back to where Uncle Roy is, the altar, and then from Uncle Tom if we went in a great big circle out that way and then back into the altar, that's where all the people stood. They all stood in a great big circle between the altar and the temple; the temple and the altar (gentlemen, you've done superbly, pray be seated!) Now this is what it says, so now they're all in position you see, and then verse 11 says, 'They brought out the king's son and put upon him the crown and gave him the testimony and made him king; and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and said, God save the king! Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people into the house of Yahweh, and she looked and behold, the king stood at his pillar at the entering in'. So I think little I think, little Joash when he was crowned as king was standing in front of one of those pillars; now here's a question, do you think he was standing in front of Uncle Jeff or Uncle Tom? what do you think? By the way, what was the name of the two pillars? Jachin and Boaz ! that's right. Well, for homework, I would like you to try and find out whether you think that Joash was standing in front of Jachin or Boaz? I won't tell you now, you can figure that out for yourself! but that's where the little king was, right at that entering in of the temple, and he's got a crown on his head and he's got the testimony in his hand'. What do you think the 'testimony' was? the testimony in verse 11, holding it in his hand like a scroll, like a sceptre? I think it was a copy of the book of the Law that all the kings had to have and they wrote out a copy of the book of the Law for this little boy, because he was too little, he was only 7! and they crowned him as king.

Then Athaliah, that terrible queen when she looked and saw all of these things, verse 13, 'when she saw what was going on, she rent her clothes and said, Treason, Treason! Then Jehoiada the priest said, 'Slay her, but **do not slay her in the temple, not in this holy place!** Not where the altar is, not where the temple is! have her forth beyond the ranges'. Then they went after Athaliah and they slew her outside of the holy place, because Jehoiada the priest said that something so terrible should not be done in the midst of the holy place of Almighty God; and little king Joash was crowned that

day! Now can you imagine being king at 7? wow! and then of the power! You could order anything for breakfast, you could get up at 10 o'clock in the morning, maybe even at the crack of noon! but he had to learn to do what was right in the eyes of God.

So we're told in chapter 24 verse 2, 'That Joash did that which was right in the sight of Yahweh **all the days of Jehoiada the priest**'. Do you know why he always did what was right when Jehoiada the priest was there? why do you think he did right in the days of Jehoiada the priest, who was really his dad? That's right! because Jehoiada was able to teach him the right way, the right principles, the way to go. But did you notice something a little bit worrying about what it says? because it says, 'that Joash did that which was right in the sight of Yahweh **all the days of Jehoiada**'. Well, we're told that on a later occasion in verse 4, 'It came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of Yahweh. And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God, from year to year and see that ye hasten the matter'. Now by the way, why do you think that Joash repaired the temple? do you think he had a good reason or just an ordinary reason? Do you think it was a spiritual reason or just an ordinary reason? Why would he have repaired the temple? Jehoiada could have told him, yes! also the disrepair of the house was a symbol of the spiritual state of decay in the nation, and to repair the house was a symbol of spiritual reform in the nation; I think all of that could be true! But I'll tell you another interesting thing! do you know, this was the only house he'd ever known, he really was only fixing up his own place, wasn't he? because he lived there. That was his home, he'd lived in the house of God since he was a little boy, in fact, he had an argument with his dad, that they weren't doing the job quick enough.

Now I want some of you to come to 2 Kings 12 and see if you can tell me, what year he repaired the temple? I want you to tell me how old you think Joash was when he repaired the temple? How old he was when this episode of repairing the temple happened? See if you can find it out in 2 Kings 12! Are there any lessons from the story? I hope you've got some lessons - I can think of lots of lessons so far! How old was he when he repaired the temple? yes madam! - he was 30 , go to the top of the class! how did you work that out? It was in the 23rd year of Joash's reign and he was 7 when he started to reign = 30. He's repairing the house of God but he's now 30, he's not a squirt anymore, did you notice that? He's now quite a big squirt - he's not even allowed to come to kid's camp anymore! he probably can't even get to youth conference, he's got to go to main camp. He's a grown man.

Now look what happens in verse 15 - it says, 'But Jehoiada waxed old and was full of days when he died: a 130 years old was he when he died. And they buried him in the city of David **among the kings** because he'd done good in Israel both toward God and toward his house'. He was 130 years old, do you reckon that was old in those days? hands up those who think Jehoiada was an **old man** when he died at 130? Have you ever seen a man whose 130 years old and still alive? What's half of 130? 65 well done! have you ever seen a man 65 and still alive? yes! good, because there are some here!

Now 130 that's getting on, you know, b&s, I believe that Jehoiada's life was miraculously preserved and extended; I think he was given additional years so that he might have opportunity to try and guide the king. He lived beyond his appointed lifetime and I think he lived for this great amount of age so he could guide the nations and particularly for Joash, for just as long as he possibly could, and I'll show you why! because just as Jehoiada perhaps had feared, so it came to pass, because in verse 17 it says, 'Now **after the death of Jehoiada**, came the princes of Judah and made obeisance to the king'. Now can someone tell me what the word 'obeisance' means? the princes of Judah came and made 'obeisance' to the king. What's that? Worship - well, yes, it includes worship; what would they do to make obeisance to the king? give him gifts! yes, it could be that they gave him gifts or presents. Tried to make him feel more important than he really was, yes, obey everything he said - yes, sort of like the word itself. Well, it could be right, but I think that these men had a little something more tricky up their sleeves! Because what they did, you see, was come before the king and made obeisance - you see, they **bowed down before the king** and they said, 'what a wonderful man he was; what a great king he was, what a marvellous man he was! But do you know why they were really saying that to the king? because you see, they were going to make a suggestion to the king, that it would be a really good idea if we spiced up our worship a bit. 'This stuff in the temple is all very well, but it's a bit old, a bit boring, a bit old-fashioned. Time we had a bit of life in the meeting! come on, Joash, we know you can do it'. Do you see what it says in the record! It says, 'Then the king hearkened unto them, verse 18, and they left the house of Yahweh Elohim of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem', and the king left the truth that his father Jehoiada had taught him about and he worshipped other gods. So the whole of the children of Israel actually worshipped other gods; what a shame, what a terrible thing that that happened after the death of the old man. I wonder if Jehoiada thought that was going to happen? Have you got any lessons down yet? oh, I do hope so! there's some big lessons here.

The record says that God sent prophets to try and bring His people back. Verse 20 says, (and now we come to the second man of our story tonight), and verse 20 says, 'The Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people and said unto them, 'Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of Yahweh, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken Yahweh, He hath also forsaken you'. Now do you know who this man was? This man was **the real son of Jehoiada** the high priest; do you think king Joash knew him? yes, why would he know Zechariah? because he grew up in the same house; they were brothers, they were really **brothers**, they had grown up in the same place in the same house under the same dad, the same mom, they'd eaten the same meals. Imagine living in the high priest's house for the bible readings at night - that would have been pretty good stuff! Oh, the readings would have been very exciting in the house of the high priest, and these two boys had grown up like brothers. Now Zechariah stands up and in effect, he tells his brother off, he says, 'you have forsaken the ways of God and you can't prosper!' So guess what Joash did to his brother. Well we're told in verse 21, 'that they conspired against him and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of

the king in the court of the house of Yahweh.'

Joash himself gave orders that Zechariah would be put to death and yet he'd grown up with him as a brother in the same house, can you imagine that? Verse 22 says, 'Thus Joash the king remember not the kindness which Jehoiada his father (oh, when it says 'his father' in verse 22, whose father is his father? Is that the father of Zechariah or the father of Joash? which one do you think? 'Jehoiada his father', whose father? it could be either, couldn't it? It could be Zechariah's father or it could really be Joash's father; either way, Joash remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him; but slew his son and when he died (and just look at this), b&s, when he died Zechariah said, '**Yahweh look upon it and require it!**' Now, I'll show you something interesting, if you come to the book of Matthew 23, (you see where it says that he was slain, by the way, in 2 Chronicles, he was slain (what does it say?) in the court of the house of God. But it wasn't just in the court, it was in a very specific place. Come to Matthew 23, and I'll show you exactly where Zechariah was slain. Now just see how tragic this was! in verse 35 it says, 'Woe unto you, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zechariah the son of Berachias, whom ye slew **between the temple and the altar**'. Oh, do those words ring a bell? between the temple and the altar! now where's that? remember Uncle Tom and Uncle Jeff and Uncle Roy, and do you remember where little king Joash was crowned? where was he crowned? between the temple and the altar. Where was Zechariah killed? between the temple and the altar. How was he killed, by the way? yes, he was stoned. Do you see what Matthew 23 and verse 37 says, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and **stonest them** that are sent unto thee'. Oh, yes, I think the Lord Jesus Christ is making reference to the death of Zechariah in 2 Chronicles 24. By the way, in Codex Sinaiticus, the phrase 'the son of Berechias' is not there in the manuscript; and the suggestion is that that's been interpolated into the text of Matthew. I think that that's the case, I think it is an interpolation, I think that the Zechariah that Jesus has in mind, is none other than Zechariah the son of Jehoiada in 2 Chronicles 24, and I'll tell you why.

Has anyone ever seen a Hebrew scroll of the Old Testament? not too many! okay, well our Hebrew bible is different to the English bible we have; does anyone know the first book of the bible in the Hebrew bible! Actually that's not too hard! anyone want to have a guess? what do you think the first book of the bible is in the Hebrew scroll? yes! Genesis - you are absolutely correct; and do you know who the first man is in that book to be killed? Abel, you're absolutely right. First man killed because of faithfulness in the truth, in the book of Genesis. Now if I come down to the other end of the Hebrew scroll, and I unravel the scroll to this end, do you know what the last book of the Hebrew bible is? you'd never believe this! 2 Chronicles, yes! stand up. 2Chronicles, you'd never believe it, and guess who's the last person who dies in the last book of the Hebrew bible because of faithfulness to the truth? why, a man called Zechariah, in 2 Chronicles 24. You see, I think what Jesus was saying in Matthew 23 when He said, 'upon whom may come all the blood that's been shed from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah', He's talking about **the whole of the Hebrew bible** from beginning to end,

all those who had been faithful in the truth and have lost their lives as a result. Can you remember what Zechariah said when He died? well when he died he said, 'Yahweh look upon it **and require it**'. I think it's a deliberate allusion to the circumstances of the death of Zechariah. In Luke 11 verse 49 it says, 'therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles and some of them they shall slay and persecute, that the blood of all the prophets that was shed from the foundation of the world, (oh, now look at this phrase!) **may be required** of this generation'. Oh, now where does that come from? 'from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zechariah which perished between the **altar and the temple**; Verily, I say unto you, **it shall be required of this generation.**' Do you know where the Lord's words come from, b&s? they come straight out of the mouth of Zechariah in 2 Chronicles 24. When Zechariah died he said, 'let Yahweh require it' and Jesus says, 'Verily I say unto you, **it shall be required of this generation**'.

So you see where Zechariah died? come back now to 2 Chronicles 24, he died we're told in the gospel records, where do you think he died? he died in the very same place, between the altar and the pillars of the temple, that's exactly right! Do you know that's the very same place where Joash had been crowned as king, and the very same place where Jehoiada his father had said, don't slay Athaliah there, this is the holy place. Do you know, that on the day that Joash was crowned, it says that Jehoiada and **his sons** (now that would include Zechariah, wouldn't it?) Jehoiada and his sons said, '**let the king live**', and now in the same place, Joash says, 'let the prophet die', and he kills him there! Oh, that was a terrible, terrible thing to do!

Now come back to 2 Chronicles 24 and let's finish off our story so I can ask you some questions. Does anyone know the meaning of the name 'Zechariah'? what it means in the Hebrew? it means 'Yahweh hath remembered' (2148) and I think his name was a prophecy of the fact that God had not forgotten that he'd been slain, and I'll show you how it was that God remembered the death of Zechariah and the **cry of Zechariah**, that Yahweh might require his death. Because verse 23 says in 2 Chronicles 24, 'It came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against Joash: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus. For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and Yahweh delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken Yahweh Elohim of their fathers; so they executed judgment against Joash. When they were departed from him, for they left him in great diseases, **his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest**'. But that's not what the Septuagint translation says, b&s, the Septuagint translation says of verse 25, 'that they conspired against him for **the blood of the son (singular) of Jehoiada the priest**'. What son might that be? but Zechariah! and God **did remember** the death of Zechariah, and God **did require that at the hands of Joash**, and his own servants slew him, because God required the blood of Zechariah at the hand of Joash.

No wonder the Lord Jesus Christ compares him to the blood of Abel because who slew

Abel? His own brother! and why did he slay him? because his brother's works were righteous and his own works were evil. Why did Joash slay Zechariah? well, he was his own brother but one man's works were righteous and the other brother's works were evil. It was very much the same story, wasn't it? and God required the death of Joash because he had taken the life of Zechariah. Oh, do you know who killed him? who killed king Joash? well, verse 26 says, 'it was Zabad the son of Simeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith a Moabitess'; the book of the Law said that you weren't allowed to have a Moabite or an Ammonite in the congregation, the king had broken the Law! How appropriate and how ironic that the two very men who slew the king, were two that he should never have allowed into the kingdom of God in the first place, Deuteronomy 23 verse 3!

Well, b&s and young people, I've finished the story, so now we come to the interesting part, all I've done is tell the story; but now I want you to tell me what the lessons are of the story. Let's just see how many lessons we can get out of tonight's story to see just how powerful the bible is to help us on our journey to the kingdom. So would anyone like to start then? Lessons from tonight! let's go:

1. We should do good all our lives! where are you getting that from? So Joash did good while his dad was alive, and when his dad died he left the truth and he wasn't good. So the need for **consistency in the truth once we've begun**.

2. We should watch our pride! so you think that Joash had a measure of pride that lead him away from the truth? he thought he knew better, is that right? particularly after his dad had died and the princes came and made obeisance to him. **Watch our pride!**

3. When power is involved people lose pity; yes, that's a good point. **When power is involved, people lose pity for others!**

4. **Never kill your brother**, that's a very good lesson. Have you got any brothers? I reckon they'll feel really glad about that, they'll be glad that you've learnt that lesson tonight, I promise you that!

5. **So never disobey your parents**, yes; try and follow the instructions of your parents. That's good!

6. **No matter how young you are, you can still do God's will**. Very good, how old are you? Nine! So, if you were Joash, you'd have been queen for 2 years by now; just as well you know how to walk in the ways of God, so that's good!

7. Some people need a good influence to stay on the right path. Okay, so there was a lesson there, wasn't there? about **the need for a godly influence in Joash's life**. Although, isn't it true, that the day comes when you've got to try and grow beyond that? That godly influence can't live forever alongside you, or maybe it can, maybe you've got to discover what is the godly influence that can live alongside you for the rest of your

life.

8. **So the need to choose our friends carefully**, because in the end Joash chose bad friends and what did they do? they lead him away from the truth, and they lead him to serve other gods and he lost the truth as a result of that, didn't he? So if we choose the wrong friends we can lose the truth! that's right. The right friends are always those friends that we have in the truth that will help us in the truth. That's good.

9. **Good examples lead to good actions!** Yes, I like that one, good examples lead to good actions.

10. **Don't kill anyone just because you get mad!** that's right. In fact, do you remember the lesson from this morning of Ephesians 4 verse 26, 'Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath'. We ought not to kill each other because we get mad, otherwise, ecclesias will get very small.

11. **Take care of your ecclesia!** Joash didn't do that, did he? that's right.

12. **If you use evil it will work against you;** in the end it rebounded on his own head. In the end he lost his own life because he followed evil. Good point!

13. **Once you're saved, you're not saved!** I think I follow the logic of that, where are you from? Ontario, I'll remember that! I understand what he said, even though you might think you are, is that right? So, in other words, **salvation is not an automatic guarantee**; we start on the journey of the truth, but we've got to remain on the right path, or salvation can be forfeited, is that what you're saying? Excellent point! I agree with that thoroughly. Good point from Ontario, thank you!

Alright, I see that our time has almost gone so, let me give you the 14th point! which is a lovely number to complete, isn't it? because it's 2 times 7! and we've talked about 2 boys

here. You know, to me, the spookiest lesson of this whole story is this, think about this! **Two boys grow up in the same home, with the same godly mother and the same spiritual father; they both learned the same bible lessons, they both went to the same bible feasts, they both ate the same bible suppers and kept Passover. But when the two boys grew to manhood, they went two different ways.** Now how could that be? Both had identical spiritual instruction, both had the same love, both had the same divine principles, but they went in opposite directions; and I think that the lesson that we're shown from the story of these two boys tonight, who could have been, don't you think? the very best of friends, if they'd wanted to be, was this: **that no matter what our background and no matter even how good our background, no matter even how good Manitoulin kids' camp is, your decision to be strong in the truth and to follow the ways of God, in the end will be your decision, and yours alone.** No one can force you, and no one can make you; we pray that everyone here will choose the path of the truth. But unless you put your own roots down in the truth, then no camp can save us! or give us the kingdom.

So we need to take advantage of a camp like this, and to absorb all of the spiritual strength that we can gain and to take all of the spiritual friendships that we can receive in a place like this, but to know, that it's absolutely vital that we make our own commitment to the truth. **It's a personal thing at the end of the day, between us and God! and God asks us, God wants us, God desires us to all grow up like Zechariah and not like Joash.** So herein lies the story of two sons, two brothers, who should have been friends. In the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, 'he that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit said'.